

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARIS 00911 121748Z

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, FR, UK, US

SUBJ: CIVAIR: CONCORDE AND A SECOND GENERATION SST

1. ARTICLE IN LE MONDE OF JAN. 8 FOLLOWING UP ON COLEMAN HEARING OF JAN. 5 INCLUDED FOLLOWING FINAL PARA: "AMERICAN AUTHORITIES HAVE BEGUN TO DISCUSS WITH FRENCH AND BRITISH CONSTRUCTORS POSSIBLE COLLABORATION FOR JOINT DEVELOPMENT OF A SECOND GENERATION SST. ACCORDING TO GEOFFREY KNIGHT, VICE PRESIDENT OF BRITISH AIRCRAFT CORPORATION, THESE TALKS ARE STILL AT A PRELIMINARY STAGE. THE OBJECTIVE WOULD BE TO CONSTRUCT AN AIRCRAFT THAT WOULD BE QUIETER THAN THE PRESENT CONCORDE AND HAVE LONGER RANGE."

2. AFP AND INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE HAVE ALSO CARRIED STORIES UNDER SEATTLE DATELINE REPORTING BOEING REP AS STATING BOEING HAS NOT ENTIRELY ABANDONED SST RESEARCH; SMALL TEAM CONTINUES WORK ON PROJECT, THOUGH THIS ONGOING

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RESEARCH IS QUITE LIMITED AND BOEING WOULD RESUME

SERIOUS STUDY OF SST ONLY IF CONVINCED IT WOULD BE ECONOMICALLY VIABLE.

3. THERE ARE THOSE IN FRANCE WHO CLAIM US OPPOSITION TO CONCORDE IS PARTLY MOTIVATED BY PROTECTIONIST DESIRE BAN CONCORDE SO IT WON'T COMPETE WITH A REVIVED US SST PROJECT. PRESS STORIES SUCH AS THE FOREGOING WILL ONLY FAN THOSE SUSPICIONS.

4. CONTINGENCY GUIDANCE WHICH WE HAD READIED EARLIER FOR USE IF QUERIED ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF REVIVAL OF US SST PROJECT INCLUDES FOLLOWING POINTS:

A) ONGOING RESEARCH IN US ON SUPERSONIC FLIGHT HAS MANY RAMIFICATIONS (E.G., MILITARY, SPACE), AND NO PLANS EXIST AT THIS TIME FOR REVIVING A CIVIL SST PROJECT.

B) SST PROJECT WHICH US ABANDONED IN 1970 WAS SO COSTLY IT REQUIRED PUBLIC FUNDING; NO US CONSTRUCTOR TODAY HAS FUNDS FINANCE SST PROJECT ON HIS OWN.

C) A MAJORITY COULD CERTAINLY NOT BE FOUND TODAY OR IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE IN THE CONGRESS TO REVERSE THE 1970 DECISION ON PUBLIC FUNDING OF SST DEVELOPMENT.

D) SO LONG AS A BAN EXISTS ON SUPERSONIC OVERFLIGHT OF CONTINENTAL US BY CIVIL AIRCRAFT, NO US CONSTRUCTOR IS LIKELY TO FIND A US-BUILT SST ECONOMICALLY VIABLE IF IT CANNOT BE MARKETING FOR USE (AT SUPERSONIC SPEEDS) ON LONG-HAUL DOMESTIC US ROUTES.

5. ADVISE IF FOREGOING CONTINGENCY GUIDANCE IS IN ANY WAY INACCURATE. IS THERE ANY BASIS TO LE MONDE REPORT OF PRELIMINARY TALKS (BY USG? BY INDUSTRY?) WITH UK AND FRANCE ON POSSIBLE COOPERATION IN SST DEVELOPMENT?
RUSH

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